OOKS IN WARTIME, BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

The Saturday Review of Literature

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By Paul Hagen
Reviewed by Percival R. Knauth

"LONG VIEW"
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THE THEORY OF THE BRASS HAT
By Leonard Bacon

24 '42

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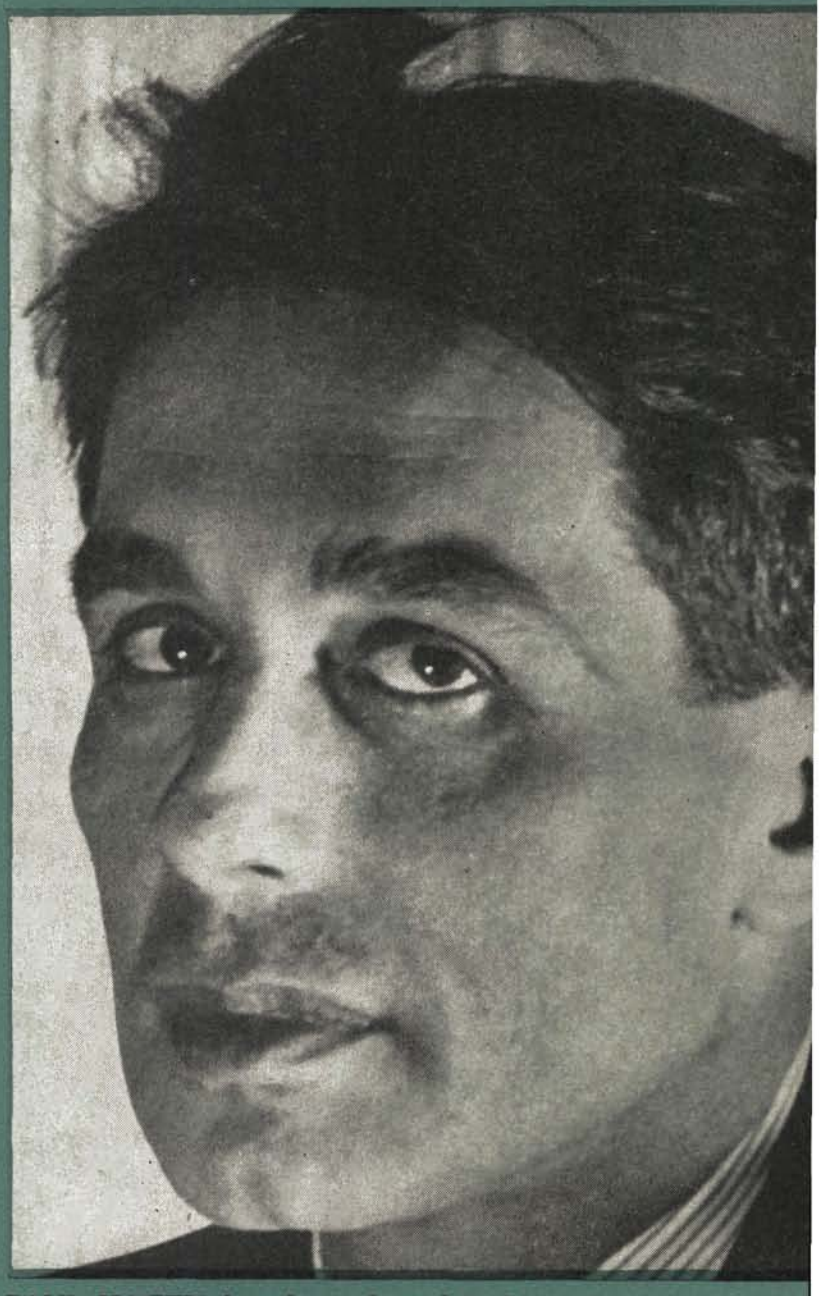

PAUL HAGEN furnishes unlimited background and food for thought for all those deeply interested in the outcome of the present struggle. *(See page 5)*

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This photo taken in action in Bataan by U. S. Army Signal Corps

The War isn't fought in Fox Holes alone

IT'S fought in the mind. It's fought with a will to win. It's fought with a belief in a cause worth dying for.

That will, that belief, is known as *morale*.

Our enemies have had years of indoctrination. They have been conditioned to believe themselves part of a "new order" . . . to which the contribution of their lives is small but all-important. They believe themselves cogs in a vast machine.

Our soldiers do not fight that way—because they do not live that way. They believe in the sanctity of the individual. They must be treated as persons.

To maintain their morale in the American way, the USO has devoted all its time and energy since practically the beginning of conscription.

It has done this by staffing and maintaining club houses near all training camps and in outlying possessions of the United States.

Today its work is far greater than ever, its need for funds to carry on more than doubled.

The USO needs your help more than ever before!

High government and military officials—including General MacArthur—have praised the work done by the USO and recognized its importance in the war effort.

But it needs recognition from *you*—recognition in the way of dollars and cents. For the six national agencies which comprise the USO are publicly supported.

Now above all times, to make your dollars count, give to the USO!

Send your contribution to your local USO Committee or to National Headquarters, USO, Empire State Building, New York, N. Y.

Give to the USO

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The Saturday Review of Literature

Books in Wartime

HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

I AM a man of peace, of Quaker descent. I would probably be regarded as a bad Quaker because I believe that war is sometimes necessary and inevitable, including this war. But I have no faith in war as an instrument, except as a last resort. And this is not because it frightens me. It does, or rather it did. I was bombed and shot at in the last war in a casual, ineffective way, and I was just as frightened as the young aviators of today say they are, before they enter a dog-fight in the air. Anyone who says he is not frightened when a bomb explodes near him is a liar. But that kind of fright has very little to do with attitudes toward war.

I regard war as the unfortunate result of a conflict not solved by more civilized means. It is like the major operation to which, so often, you have to submit because you or your doctor had failed to take proper care of your insides. And I know, in spite of the statements of convinced pacifists that war never settles anything, that war has settled many very important issues, sometimes for good as well as often for ill. Consider the Greeks at Salamis, or our American Revolution. Yet I disbelieve utterly in the kind of talk which began in books in the nineteenth century, and was first made public policy by that now famous miscalculator, Mussolini—talk of war being in itself good and even necessary to the preservation of national morale. I believe this philosophy of war to be stale romanticism, denied by science and repugnant to morality. If we tackled the innumerable problems and dangers of civilization with sufficient aggressiveness, no one would have to shoot other men like himself, or be shot, in order to keep his chin up and his soul awake.

Hence, when I choose so seemingly trite a subject as Books in Wartime, it is not for academic or literary purposes. It is not trite, and for two good reasons. The history of books in wartime has never been fully appreciated, if understood at all, by either military historians or the general reader, and, second, the place of books in this war is new and unique.

Men (and women) begin wars because they are greedy, or because they are angry, or because (and most frequently) they are afraid, or because they have acquired a doctrine, or faith, or religion which makes them feel superior to their neighbors. If their neighbors will not admit this superiority, then, in so-called self-protection, they try to break their heads. I am not intending to be sarcastic. These causes of fighting may be just, and are sometimes noble. A hungry man is greedy, a threatened man is fearful, an oppressed man gets angry, an inspired man feels that he has a lesson to teach the world. I am perfectly clear in my own mind, for example, as to the essential character of the war in which we are now involved. Its roots go deep into evils and injustices of the past for which we are all, in differing measures, responsible. But roots and fruit are very different in the eyes of God and man. Otherwise we might be cultivating the poison ivy in our fields and cutting down the apple trees. Evolution made the poison ivy poisonous, but that fact does not stop us when it becomes necessary to pull it out of good ground. Wherever in the errors of the nineteenth and twentieth century, the roots of this conflict may have got their first nourishment, it has become a clear-cut struggle as to which of two resultant fruits of will and desire shall determine our future:—the slow evolution of democracy and Christianity toward a world run for the benefit of all the peoples,—or violence, demagoguery, and mental and physical slavery for the sake of efficiency and the benefit of the relatively few. And these few, who propose to survive and govern us, are clearly not the fittest according to any standard hitherto acknowledged by that civilization which, with all its faults, is still our pride. Out of the depths, over thousands of years, we have come. Are we to turn back toward the pit from which human rights have so slowly emerged? That is the essence of all issues in this war now, as all but the most hopelessly short-sighted, or the enemy battling for self-preservation or aggrandizement, must admit. We who stand for the people and for the individual are not worthy of so great a cause, we may lose it even in winning, we are very imperfect men and women, not clear-sighted gods. But this is the issue, and whatever we fight for, the meaning of the fight is this.

—From "He Who Laughs—Lasts."

AS for books in wartime, what is it that raises greed, anger, fear, a religion to the point where it breaks into combat? What gives these causes leadership, or, to put it more accurately, what enables leaders to raise hungry, frightened, angry, soul-stirred men to the fighting pitch? Actual physical and psychological circumstances, sometimes, no doubt, as in the case of a slave insurrection or a levy en masse to repel an invader. But still more, still oftener, ideas. And these ideas either come from books or make books. It is not important for the argument which.

Consider just three fighting books of the many in world history. There are numerous causes for the great Mos-

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lem flood that engulfed the remains of classic civilization and swept to Spain and Austria in the West and China in the East. Yet no one can doubt the importance in this world movement of the Koran, that Bible of the Moslems. The Koran went with the invaders, the ideas of the Koran sharpened and gave meaning to the Moslem wars, the Koran and Moslem morale were almost identical. Or the Bible. The Bible is not the result of Hebrew nationalism, and the tenacious sense of a mission which has kept the Jews a community in spite of their dispersion; it is a cause. It was the ethical religion of the Bible which inspired Protestantism, and, more broadly, Puritanism, one of the great aggressive forces in our civilization. Again, that great assemblage of human rights, which was never one book, but which includes Rousseau and Tom Paine, and the Declaration of Independence, and the *Federalist* papers, and the American Constitution,—there could have been *an* American Revolution without its dynamic force, but not *our* Revolution; there could have been *a* conflict between North and South, but not *our* War between the States; we could have entered the last war, but not for the same set of reasons which led us in, and ditto for 1939 to 1942.

IT may be difficult to grasp these generalizations without a historical analysis. However, these propositions become simpler if you consider, from a new point of view, the nature of a book. A book, any book of depth and meaning, is a filing case. It contains the ideas, feelings, passions, prejudices, memories, hopes, available facts, and most of all, the philosophy of life of the writer. This is as true of a novel as it is of Hamlet, or the Bible, or a book like Churchill's "Blood, Sweat, and Tears." And these ideas, prejudices, passions, hopes are separable, especially in books like those cited above, the purpose of which is not merely to describe, but to tell you something, to make you believe. From an actual filing case may come a plan of a campaign for a political party, or a set of deadly facts to be used to destroy an argument, or notes for a speech which sets millions thinking, or a bit of narrative you will never forget. Open the case, run your hand along the key cards, and take out what you want or need. A book—I mean a book with vital substance in it—is also like that. No one can even guess what has been drawn out and put into circulation from such books as Tolstoy's "War and Peace," from Darwin's "Origin of Species," from Woodrow Wilson's "Speeches," from Karl Marx's "Das Kapital," from Abraham Lincoln's "Addresses and Messages," from the poetical prose of Nietzsche and Emerson, from Thoreau's "Walden," from Whitman's "Leaves of Grass," from Milton's "Paradise Lost," from, to come down to the colloquial, Mark Twain's "Huckleberry Finn," and Sinclair Lewis's "Babbitt."

If space permitted, I should like to illustrate from competent authorities how the Nazi philosophy and the Nazi methods of organization go back through decades and centuries to filing cases, which were books. The Nazi idea of Nordic blood superiority can readily be traced to nineteenth century sources in an English and in a French book. The Nazi Pan Germanism, with its theory of a master folk and a Europe dominated and organized by a greater Germany, has a great library of writing behind it, beginning with the philosophies of the romantic revival in the German eighteenth century. For the idea of a German military state organized for total war, see the letters of Frederick the Great to Voltaire, as well as his practice as described in many books. For the German moral concept of this war, that whatever benefits Germany is right, see again the eighteenth century German philosophers. And for the particular set of prejudices, passions, techniques of propaganda, hopes for the future, and proper attitudes of the German to his neighbors, and the duty of these neighbors to serve a greater Germany, read with growing enlightenment as to what I am writing about, that most powerful, most dangerous, most active of all books in our time, Hitler's "Mein Kampf." It is the subversive ideas of "Mein Kampf," deadly to democracy, deadly to Christianity, that we are fighting now as truly as we are fighting the German Army and General Staff, and will have to continue to fight, at home as well as abroad.

IT is hardly necessary for me to point out that the book, regarded as a filing case of ideas, has been mechanized in this war, with an increase in efficiency of distribution of those ideas comparable only to the increased efficiency of airplanes and pincer divisions. I refer, of course, to the radio, by which a modern Jeremiah or Patrick Henry or Hampden or Voltaire or Luther or Lincoln could, like Roosevelt, though speaking in a small room, speak also, and immediately, to the world. And so can the Napoleons of our day, or the Satans who would make the worse appear the better reason, or the Metternichs, or the Judas Iscariots, or the Benedict Arnolds, and also the contemporary McClellans or the Lodges, who, often, may not realize the dangers of the causes they

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The Suction Factor in Germany

WILL GERMANY CRACK? By Paul Hagen. New York: Harper & Bros. 1942. 283 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by PERCIVAL R. KNAUTH

THE past year or so has furnished us with many books telling of life and conditions in pre-war and wartime Germany; but perhaps all too few which have sought, as their sole purpose, the objective analysis of the economic and human phenomena underlying the present situation in the Reich. Hagen's book, "a factual report on Germany from within," furnishes unlimited background and food for thought for all those deeply interested in the outcome of the present struggle and—no less important—in the period of reconstruction which must follow.

Mr. Hagen has chosen a very apt time to approach the question "Will Germany Crack?" And he has done a remarkably able job of analysis. There is in this book a wealth of detail, backed by reports from Nazi, foreign, and "underground" sources which must fascinate the student of Germany. Mr. Hagen has his "pipelines," the necessary equipment of the reporter. They originate, he says, directly in Germany. In all fairness it must be said that those who have worked in the Third Reich have learned to treat such surreptitious sources of information with caution as springing, perhaps, from dissatisfied minorities. But the author has taken this into consideration also, and his "inside" reports appear to be borne out by the facts. To bolster their contentions, he has drawn liberally on more open sources of information—excerpts from Nazi decrees and regulations, reports from accredited correspondents directly in Germany, including well-known American newsmen, and statistical comparisons with the past on the basis of which he draws inescapable conclusions.

The result is a searching analysis of every important phase of the German economic, political, and military set-up. Mr. Hagen, an Austrian by birth, an expert on German labor, and present Research Director of the "Inside Germany Reports," has a long list of subjects: the labor problem of the Reich, the Nazi labor code, the condition of German armament workers, the fuel, iron, steel, transportation, food, clothing, agricultural, middle class, and Big Business situation. Each of these chapters stands up under searching scrutiny—to those who know Nazi history many of the events and condition described are familiar, the conclusions drawn in agreement with deductions made on the scene. It is amazing to see the details amassed here, most of them buried in the back pages of newspapers, but each fitted into a pattern which adds up to a sound and complete whole. In a chapter on "The Truth about the Generals' Revolt" there is the first thorough study of the events of last winter which were highlighted by the resignation of Field Marshall von Brauchitsch; and some bitter truths about the fallacy of expecting an acceptable peace from the military clique of the Reich. It all paints a picture of a Germany in which the ingredients of defeat are already plentifully in evidence, but which requires more effort than wishful thinking to be brought to the point of collapse and the expulsion of Hitler's regime.

Mr. Hagen throughout is emphatic on the matter of wishful thinking. He has no illusions and imparts none—in the words of Elmer Davis, who furnishes an introduction, "what you read here may not be what you are hoping for; it is not altogether what Hagen is hoping for either." The author characterizes his book as an effort "to illustrate and bring the difficulties in which the Hitler regime finds itself into sharper focus," and thereby he has done a great service to the true understanding of present-day Germany. He points his moral with a chapter on "How to Beat Hitler Politically," in which he outlines a program to win over and utilize against Nazism the "anti-fascist potential" which he is convinced exists in the Reich. The "core of strength" of this potential he sees as lying in the German labor movement which, contrary to other opinions looking for the "illusion" of a military or Big Business leadership, he believes, will be the motivating force in a new "democratic and also a modern movement" in Germany. Mr. Hagen offers in his conclusion a solution for post-war Europe which he furnishes with a sound basis of human logic. Briefly, he is for a European federation, which he believes is "not only possible but overdue . . . What is lacking for its realization is only the intellectual readiness, which has lagged far behind our technical advancement." Such a federation, democratic in nature, must, in his view, have equal representation of all states, including the defeated nations, if it is not to harbor within it the germs of new dissatisfactions which can be used to advantage by some future Hitler. "Unless the democratic revolution is completed as a part of the reconstruction of Europe in a new world, the victory will not be secure."

Percival R. Knauth, formerly on the Berlin staff of the New York Times, *is at present on the foreign news desk of that paper.*

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 429)

LOWELL:
(THE) WASHERS OF THE SHROUD (OCTOBER, 1861)

God, give us peace! not such as lulls to sleep,
But sword on thigh, and brow with purpose knit!
And let our Ship of State to harbor sweep
Her parts up all, her battle-lanterns lit,
And her leashed thunders gathering for their leap!

—Cartoon from P.M., Sunday, 5th April, 1942, by Carl Rose.

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Brave and Lyric

LONG VIEW. By Genevieve Taggard. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1942. 113 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

IN spite of what seems in her later years a desire on her own part to classify herself, to say "Here I stand in the 'class struggle'!", the present reviewer finds it almost impossible to classify Miss Taggard as a poet. If you use the image of a gem, she has many facets, and she has always possessed a quality like the moods of water. A natural lyric poet whom the necessities of life forced into pedagogical paths, she has developed a didactic strain. Her heredity is from teachers and spreaders of enlightenment. Endowed with great personal attractiveness, she has ever and again enjoyed writing scornful poems not without their own attraction. She has never spared those she conceived to be romantic and soft, and yet she remains one of our most exhilarating romantics:

Merryall land is in upper air.
People there
Follow an airy logic out of sight
Far out of compromise, into white light,
Into bright danger . . .

She once set that down as part of a "Preface to a Poem I Could Not Write." It appeared in her 1934 volume, "Not Mine to Finish," and beside the notable "Try Tropic" in that book was the pure song of "Lark," the best and most beautiful of her imperatives. She is fond of imperatives. A recent critic pointed out amusingly that, in the present book under review, after telling those she didn't like to be speedy about their dying, she even exhorts the crocus in a "March Meditation," "Come up, crocus. Bold crocus, come," (Again, in "Hymn to the Sun," "Up now or consent to lie still!") Her squirrel is "300 times as alive as you," presumably meaning the human race. Observation of him involves social criticism. The growth of this didacticism seems to me rather a pity.

Miss Taggard once berated "Mr. Maunder Maunder, Professional Poet" for "making rhyme schemes," and yet certain mannerisms have grown upon her herself. That is when she is too conscious of being a poet. Even in the real and striking poem, "No Abstraction," about graying hair, "Caught I this" is self-conscious. (It may be replied that all good poetry is bound to be self-conscious, and in a sense that is so, but I think there is a distinction.) When she is deeply moved, however, by a specific event, as in her poem "To the Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade," this falls away. No one will write a more honest poem about those young men:

Say of them they were young, there was much they did not know,
They were human. Say it all; it is true. Now say
When the eminent, the great, the easy, the old,
And the men on the make
Were busy bickering and selling,
Betraying, conniving, transacting splitting hairs,
Writing bad articles, signing bad papers,
Passing bad bills,
Bribing, blackmailing,
Whimpering, meaching, garroting, —they
Knew and acted
understood and died.

The title poem of this book "Long View," is a fine and beautiful poem. Like "Lark," like the lines of the "Preface" quoted, it wells up out of natural emotional lyricism, which is something not to be dictated to any poet. (Certain modern poems might be classified as "dictated but not read.") Some of Miss Taggard's brief "Songs for Music" have this same pure quality. I would say in general that you will find life and variety in this book, still of a talent in process, but of a real talent. In a difficult time, this poet has given us a great deal that is beautiful, intelligent, and brave. Miss Taggard follows her hope and imagination "far out of compromise, into white light, into bright danger." A poet also of subtlety and suggestion. And the fact that she remains unclassifiable is actually high praise.

—*Margaret Bourke-White*
Genevieve Taggard

Your Literary I. Q.

By Howard Collins

BECAUSE THEY LOOKED ALIKE . . . .

Occasionally an author finds it convenient to have two of his characters identical in appearance. In the instances described below, allow five points if you can recall either of the two characters involved, and another five if you can recall the story in which they appeared or its author. A score of 60 is par, 70 is good, and 80 or better is excellent. Answers on page 14.

1 . . . these boys were able to trade places as Prince of Wales and beggar lad.

2 . . . an unsuccessful lover substituted himself on the guillotine so that his rival might live and marry the girl.

3 . . . this English gentleman was able to impersonate the ruler of a Balkan kingdom for three months, thus saving the latter his crown and his bride.

4 . . . these fat and quarrelsome little brothers had their names embroidered on their collars.

5 . . . this sister was mistaken for her twin brother when she disguised herself in male attire in order to get a job as a page in the service of a duke.

6 . . . a scheming bishop plotted to substitute the king of France for the king's illegitimate twin brother, who had long been a prisoner in the Bastille, and so gain the post of cardinal and prime minister.

7 . . . the heir to a huge patent medicine business was the victim of a clever plot whereby he was committed to an insane asylum while a cousin usurped his place.

8 . . . these half-sisters were the victims of a villainous plot, whereby a villain married one of them, had her confined in an asylum in place of the other, who was dying, and inherited her fortune by burying the other as his wife.

9 . . . a minister overburdened with inconsequential public duties employed an uneducated pauper to make public appearances for him, and taught him four sentences which would take care of all conversation likely to arise.

10 . . . these infants were switched in the cradle by their Negro nurse, to prevent the one who was her son and who was one-thirty-second part Negro from being sold down the river.

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Theory of the Brass Hat

LEONARD BACON

LET me state at once that it is not my object to attack the military mind in spite of the implications of the title. The military mind differs little from the literary mind or the scientific mind except in subject matter. The same laws apply to it, and its successes or failures correspond to those laws. But the term "brass hat," which was coined by them of old time to describe a condition of mind not unknown in the armed services, has been hung with special success on generals and admirals, it is believed, with the normal amount of unfairness. We ourselves have recently experienced some of the end results of this condition of mind in a manner painful to our national vanity. It has left a bad taste in millions of mouths. And many of us are doubtless prepared to ask for penalties on the officers whose bad judgment and insufficient use of means at their disposal set us back on our heels at Pearl Harbor. But we shall make a mistake, if we think that disciplining two unfortunate men will remove an evil that is not so much professional as part of human nature.

In order to make this clear, it is necessary to go through the perfunctory business, so like a brass hat's, of defining a brass hat, and this seems to be about it. A brass hat is a person of some experience in a position of some authority, who sets a higher value on experience than on ability or intelligence. Any one who lives long enough can have experience, but it does not follow that one learns from it. The luckless commanders in Hawaii clearly had the brass hat complex, for they were unwilling to take into consideration anything that was not in their own experience. They had risen to the tops of their respective trees by refusing to expect the unexpected. And a desperate and treacherous act which had only a ten per cent chance of success came within an ace of hundred per cent success, because these officers, probably early in their careers, had had any faint interest in eccentric methods of warfare carefully eradicated from their minds by men much like the men they themselves subsequently became. Everyone who ever served in an army can think of such instances. I myself knew a highly intelligent officer who was sent to Coventry in an undersirable post in the Canal Zone, because he had trained his machine-gun company to get more than the specified number of shots per minute out of the Benét-Mercier gun of the times. The brass hat above him thought apparently that this efficient performance was an insult not to be borne and literally penalized ingenuity which had been exercised for the good of the service. A few episodes like that when an ensign and a second lieutenant had just been commissioned would go a long way to explain, though not to excuse, the fact that an admiral and a general took some measures against probable sabotage and none against possible attack. They and the naval aviation chief who was so certain about a universal negative were sad proofs that experience is not a satisfactory substitute for imaginative ability.

But men who lack this quality are not a special product of fleets and armies, though their blunders at critical times are often more conspicuous than those of poets and scientists. There are plenty of men, fortunately, in both services, and in high position, who are in no sense brass hats. General MacArthur is clearly the antithesis of everything the term implies. And apparently the race of good admirals is not extinct, though they are shy birds and only discoverable by specially trained ornithologists. However, my point is that the brass hat exists in huge numbers outside of the armed services and is quite as great a pest and danger in civil life as anywhere else. Most banks are full of brass hats. There is apt to be one at least in every publishing house. Dozens of authors are brass hats. Great law firms, great corporations, great labor unions, are lousy with them. They abound in universities, where a specially cocksure breed has been developed partly by art and partly by accident. And finally both houses of the national legislature have collections that know no rival except each other. It is doubtless a natural spirit of competition which has made the House and the Senate follow so hot on the trail of fairly ingenious imitators. The men who voted against fortifying Guam must naturally resent an ineptitude comparable, though not equal, to their own.

The congressional brass hat enjoys one special advantage over his less favored military or naval brother. He cannot be court-martialed. And to impeach him is a herculean or rather Augean task. Yet he can commit what amounts to treason by betraying American troops on their way to Iceland. The men would have been in actual danger by the Senator's fault, had it suited Hitler's plans. Yet that particular senator squawled for blood like a catamount when Pearl Harbor laid his surge of isolationism. Another good specimen is a congressman, who talked it all over with Ribbentrop just before Munich and has been from time to time a great comfort to our unfriends. His official secretary has recently been convicted of perjury in connection with what appears to have been traffic with a power now at war with us. That gives forth a smell. But what I like best about that congressman is an episode of thirty-three years ago. He was then captain of the Harvard football team. And a photograph of the time shows him in the act of not blocking the Yale fullback's dropkick, though not a soul is between the hero and his legitimate prey. This is symbolic. Ever since he has blocked the things he ought not to have blocked, and left unblocked the things he ought to have blocked, with the result that there is no health in him.

Nevertheless that will never prevent him from performing the natural function of the brass hat. To look coldly at a subordinate and point out-non-existent or wholly insignificant error, "to get out of bed on the wrong side and make a whole regiment know it," to increase morale by damaging a junior's self-respect, these are the fruits by which the brass hat is known. And there is not one of us but has reason to curse the diffidence implanted in a young officer, who, when a sergeant reported the rustling of wings, picked up in a microphone while the danger was yet a hundred miles off shore, was so afraid of giving a false alarm that he failed to give a true one. That boy will never draw an easy breath again. But he is almost excusable, if, as is almost certain, he had witnessed the humiliation of those whom the brass hat considered to be overzealous. He didn't stick his neck out. How he wishes now that he had stuck it out then! But even after the event, few brass hats would recommend that. Nevertheless, as I trust I have made clear, there is no particular point in looking for the brass hat at staff headquarters. He is endemic and can be found wherever a man has had a chance to grow self-important. If imagination and ability are not there, a brass hat will be.

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ELMER DAVIS

Director, Office of War Information

READERS of *The Saturday Review* will join with the editors in wishing Elmer Davis well in his appointment as Director of the newly established Office of War Information, which is to absorb the various official agencies already functioning on the news-information-propaganda-public policy front of the war, among them the Office of Facts and Figures, the Office of Government Reports, and the Division of Information. Affected by the consolidation are some thirty thousand individuals working in various government departments, and, quite understandably, a number of them performing overlapping and duplicating functions. Judging by the President's statement, however, the Office of War Information is to be more than merely a coördinating super-agency; it is to have a unity of its own, extending beyond its organizational form to the purposes and aims behind the war effort.

The difficulties, the problems, the sheer size of this job would make an impressive though frightening catalogue. Quite outside the job itself, the almost inevitable tug-of-war between government departments and agencies—a tug-of-war that has become synonymous with Washington itself—has been no more evident than in the operation of the news and propaganda work of the government, for this is very nearly the nerve center of the home front, with lines leading into it from every agency connected with the war.

Under the circumstances, it would be unfair to Mr. Davis to expect an overnight miracle, for there may be few if any sure-fire solutions to many of the problems which have revealed themselves in the government's effort to keep press and public supplied with information consistent with military expediency. But it would be difficult to find a man better qualified than Mr. Davis for the job which has been placed in his lap by the President. Those who know of Elmer Davis and his work are agreed that he has a fundamental clarity in his thinking (his mind is less cluttered with trivia than any man of our acquaintance), and a basic soundness and saneness in his approach to problems. These qualities, combined with his rich writing and journalistic background, make him particularly well suited for the job. There is a remarkable sorting, discarding, and integrating process going on automatically in his mind every moment of the day.

Insofar as choosing the right human being may be all that is necessary for any job, it may reasonably be considered that this particular job will automatically be a spectacular success. But it so happens that there are x's in this equation going beyond the human factor. If the work of the department is to be concerned, as it is, with information and public attitudes, what is its policy to be toward certain influences which are possibly more harmful to the total effort than military communiques that tell too much or too little, or public utterances that are poorly timed or poorly phrased?

What is to be done, for example, with that section of the press that is consistently and with conspicuous emphasis giving a twist to various aspects of the war that seems demonstrably obstructive in the first place, and demonstrably inaccurate in the second place? To name names, a strong case might be made against the *Chicago Tribune* and the *New York Daily News,* both of which will serve very adequately as Exhibits A and B in any national inventory of sour-noters. The *Tribune* has played up news in such a way as to foster, intentionally or otherwise, a lack of faith among its readers in the government war effort. Its headlines, compared with other newspapers carrying the same news items, would form a bill of particulars in itself. As for the *Daily News,* if enough Americans shared that point of view, we wouldn't give a wooden nickel for our chances in this war. As one indication of *Daily News* policy, its comment on the recent speech and book by Henry A. Wallace called "The Price of Free World Victory" is a case in point. With distortion so sharp it was almost eloquent, the *Daily News* interpreted Wallace's generalization about the coming century as the century of the common man, as an argument in favor of unlimited and unrestricted immigration which would pollute the bloodstream of America and wreck the national economy. It is possible to agree with the *News* in opposing moves to reverse the present policy on immigration, but it is certainly not possible to construe Wallace's speech as having anything to do with immigration or any variant thereof.

The press is an intermediate agent between government and the public in this war. No one genuinely interested in the preservation of democratic institutions wants or urges censorship. But no one genuinely interested in the preservation of democratic institutions wants to see the press flout its responsibility or have the effect not only of weakening the home front but of endangering the very principle of free expression. Criticism, yes. It makes no difference how deep it cuts, how much it hurts. But it must be constructive criticism, not sniping, obstructionism, or defeatism.

Where to draw the line? It may be that Elmer Davis will have no power to draw any lines of this sort, anyway, in which case our discussion of the press is futile. But if this discussion is futile, the problem nevertheless remains—a present liability and potentially a greater one, and sooner or later it will be the job of some official agency to tackle it.

N. C.

NATHALIE SEDGWICK COLBY

(1875 - 1942)

IT was too soon for America to part with a fine novelist and brave woman, when Mrs. Sedgwick Colby died at the Harkness Pavilion early this month. It was too soon for her many friends to lose one of the wittiest of companions and one of the most cordial and loyal of friends. Not to mention numerous essays and poems, Mrs. Colby wrote five novels and a sparkling autobiography. Always a mistress of satire, she directed frequent darts against the shams of society. She opposed all that was pretentious and pompous in political life. She brought with her always a breath of fresh, clean intellectual air. Of old New England stock, she represented the independent courage of an older America. She was a fine and intelligent liberal to the end, the mother of three artistic and brilliant daughters.

It was a gallant life, lived swiftly. Social grace, literary acumen, keen humor, flashing commentary were rarely blended. A single love wrung her heart her life long. She was a beautiful person. The lines of Yeats come to mind:

> I heard the old, old men say,
> All that's beautiful drifts away
> Like the waters.

But peace to you now, good friend, and joy abiding!

W. R. B.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Bromfield Review

SIR:—The review of L. Bromfield's latest novel "Until the Day Breaks" by Bess Jones (June 6th) is so injust that it really *hurts*.

"Superficial, trivial" are the adjectives used to describe the story, but does Bess Jones know what it means to live the way these people lived in occupied Paris? Is it so "trivial" to give their lives to publish and spread useful information, be it on an ever so "tiresome and overworked a device as a printing press" because that is one of the most powerful weapons in any uprising, revolution or revolt.

Could Bess Jones recommend a better one? . . . a newer one? . . .

In this story one feels the author's love for Paris and his knowledge of it, and one may well believe the "not too bright" American dancer becoming gradually involved in underground work and escaping death only by luck.

The German major is neither stupid nor such an easy mark—proof are the people he caught in his web and killed—and his psychology is very German.

"Commonplace sabotage," which seems so unimportant to your reviewer, only shows what superficial knowledge of the horror of occupied countries the reviewer possesses. And may I add, I should know: I have lived through several years of it.

ANNA DE BEAUSSET.

Ardmore, Penna.

Britannica & Jesuits

SIR:—The disclosure regarding the frequent revisions which the Encyclopaedia Britannica undergoes, made by Mr. Lydgate in his article [*SRL,* May 2], brings to mind the astonishing piece of revamping which the several pages devoted to Jesuits underwent sometime between the two editions which I happen to have in my library—the ninth, published in 1892, and the eleventh, published in 1910. The manner in which an indictment has been changed into an apology, while retaining whole sections of the original matter untouched, must certainly be one of the most ardoit feats of literary legerdemain on record. One suspects that a history of the re-writing would make an illuminating commentary on the article itself.

Incidentally, though it leans so far toward friendly prejudice as to omit any reference to the Dreyfus case, which in 1910 was still odorous in the nostrils of the world, even the later article leaves the reader with the conviction that inquiry into the activity of the Jesuits in recent years might well be on the agenda of the statesmen who will remake the world after the war.

(MISS) FLORENCE C. ROBERTS.

Rockford, Illinois.

"Every time he kisses a woman he forgets the script and starts handing her a line!"

The Quip Perfect

SIR:—First prize for the year's most devastating remark goes to Bennett Cerf for his, "Another forthcoming volume is The Problems of Lasting Peace by Herbert Hoover and Hugh Gibson. Mr. Hoover was once the President of the United States." [Trade Winds, 25 May, 1942]. Only the sober second though dubious—"Or was he?" is needed to make the quip a perfect one.

GEORGE M. P. BAIRD.

Pittsburgh.

Regional Numbers

SIR:—Undersigned has read your periodical since the start—being thus a charter member—and often found many things that were helpful or provocative, but *your plan of Regional Numbers is really a forward development.* I am enjoying immensely the Southwest Number in its various articles; we need something closer to us based on the possibilities of American life—this ought to vitalize the review. The map is a fine idea—*however you ought to identify books placed on the map as to authors, editions, publishing Co.'s.* As it stands it is tantalizing! However, you have made a good move.

WALTER W. GUSTAFSON.

East Orange, New Jersey.

Italics Defended

SIR:—Mr. Ellis Roberts, amusing himself over my "ecstasy of italics," omits a *non*—which was its cause. There is a difference between the English-speaking and the non-English speaking learner. He omits, too, the sentence which follows the italics: "I emphasize this because the point is so often missed."

It certainly is. For example, I am accused of "a glaring *non-sequitur*" and of "mental confusion" for warning people not to talk of *the* Christian conception of love, as though there were only one. None the less, to talk so is like talking of *the* eighteenth century conception of combustion (compare the fires of love) as though Lavoisier and his predecessors differed only in their statements of one doctrine. And that was the point of my remark.

Mr. Roberts is above such matters. I am grateful to him, however, for making me note once more the perils of irony and ellipsis.

I. A. RICHARDS.

Burbank, Calif.

Difficult Search

SIR:—I am writing the lives of two very interesting gentlemen of the Old South—both writers and both Romanticists, one a novelist and one a poet—but the best I've been able to do in six months of inquiry is to turn up fifteen letters by the poet.

What I'm hoping for is to turn up some descendants of the two who may possess MSS of any sort, and in this endeavor your magazine should be a great help, if you could lend me a line or two. The writers are James Mathews Legaré (1823-59), a poet of Charleston, S. C., and William Alexander Caruthers (*c.* 1803-46), an historical novelist of Virginia and, later, of Savannah, Georgia.

CURTIS CARROLL DAVIS.

Durham, N. C.

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—*From the mural by Frank Long, in the Louisville, Ky., Post-Office.*

Bluegrass or Bust

WEEP NO MORE, MY LADY. By Alvin F. Harlow. New York: Whittlesey House. 1942. 443 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by JOHN MASON BROWN

ALTHOUGH he was not born there, Alvin H. Harlow loves Kentucky as much as if he had been. Every page of his "Weep No More, My Lady" trumpets this affection. He feels about it much as did the Methodist minister who years ago, when having struggled for some time up north to describe the realm beyond the pearly gates, finally settled for, "In short, my brethren, to say all in one word, Heaven is a Kentuck of a place."

Kentucky was in Mr. Harlow's blood, which means that it still is. His mother was from the Bluegrass; his father from the "Pennyrile"; and the summers of his boyhood were spent on pilgrimages "back home," which obviously have not ended yet. It was not Mr. Harlow's fault if his parents moved to Missouri. Their loss was his gain. Being a partial outsider, thoroughly at home in land where his home was not, has kept his wonder undimmed, his curiosity unsatisfied, and granted to his impressions the freshness of the tourist's impact. As a resident he might have taken much for granted; as a traveler he could not. At least he did not. The result is a book which the publishers rightly describe as "not a history, not a travel book, not a volume of reminiscences, but a thoroughly enjoyable amalgam of all three." Although "Weep No More, My Lady" is more of a grab-bag than a rounded study, it is a loving collection of tall tales about a tall people. Set down with more ardor than art, it is at one moment written with an antiquarian's fervor for the past, and at the next with a feature writer's concern with the present, but seldom without a communicated interest.

Mr. Harlow's admiration for Kentucky and for Kentuckians is unbounded. He loves the state's frontier past, its aristocrats and its hill-billies, its violence and its tenderness, its liquor and its food, its mammies and its feudists, its legends and its politics, its horses and its hounds, its Englishness and its Irishness, its manners and its murders, its decorum and its flamboyance. In short, he dotes upon the contrasts in which his material abounds, and jubilantly makes more than the most of them. He has fascinating stories to tell and tells them so that they do not lose their fascination. His knowledge is encyclopedic; his humor generous; his style garrulous, sentimental, journalistic, and informal.

One leaves his pleasant pages regretfully; filled with a new knowledge of Kentucky, a knowledge at once personal and historical. Almost the whole state is there, often glowingly described. At least most of what is picturesque in its past and in its present is recorded, uncritically and conversationally, but with gusto. The only trouble is that Mr. Harlow has been so captivated by the quaint, the odd, and the colorful that he has been tempted to overlook the normal and the cultured. He has room for the freaks but fails to consider the work of Kentucky's painters, writers, and historians. He passes over the frontier theatre entirely, and fails to mention either Macaulay's or Mary Anderson. Informative as his pages are—and often sprightly, too—one puts down his book wishing that he had, so to speak, been as interested in painting Cromwell's face as he was in painting his wart.

Modern Architect

ON BEING AN ARCHITECT. By William Lescaze. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1942. 287 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by PAUL ZUCKER

A PECULIAR mixture of a how-to-do-book, an autobiography, some polemics, and some general esthetic ideas about architecture, Mr. Lescaze's volume makes good reading. It is exceedingly informal, but this quality will probably stimulate the layman to give some thought to the subject of architecture more than would scholarly books on theories.

I do not think it still necessary to fight against the eclectic architecture of the nineteenth century or to state the similarity between the individual capitols of American states. Neither is it necessary to explain again and again that the functions of our time have to be expressed by forms which cannot be borrowed from earlier periods. Modern architecture is now definitely a fact, repudiating historic imitations, led by the principle of Louis Sullivan that "form follows function." The fight for this principle was waged by the generation just preceding ours, in this country from Louis Sullivan to Frank Lloyd Wright, in France from Tony Garnier to Le Corbusier, in Austria from Josef Hoffman to Adolf Loos, in Germany from Peter Behrens to Walter Gropius, in the Lowlands from H. P. Berlage to J. J. Dudok. Victory was definitely achieved between the years 1920 and 1930.

Illustrating his book mainly by photographs of the buildings he did himself, Mr. Lescaze addresses the student and his fellow-architect with much valuable advice taken from his own experience, and discussions of the architect's role today. Every practising architect will find analogies to his own daily problems,—how to get a job, how to deal with clients, how to find the right balance between sometimes contradictory practical requests, etc. Lescaze is entirely right when he emphasizes the fact that architecture is based on order and denounces any kind of romanticism. He is even more right when he tells the student that most of an architect's work is done in his head and not on the drawing board.

Any enlivening approach towards such a complex matter as architecture designed for the general public has, of course, to simplify its problems. Mr. Lescaze's simplification, which almost approximates the style of newspaper articles, makes his book readable for the layman and helps his purpose of propagating the fundamental ideas of modern architecture.

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The Methods of Mark Twain

MARK TWAIN AT WORK. By Bernard DeVoto. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1942. 144 *pp.* $2.

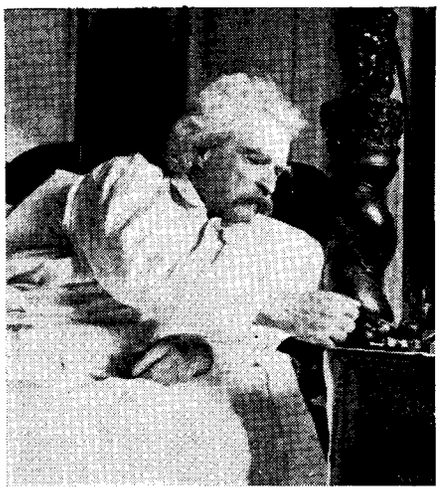
Reviewed by WALTER BLAIR

WHEN, in 1938, Mr. Bernard DeVoto succeeded Albert Bigelow Paine as custodian of the Mark Twain Papers, what he hoped to find in the manuscripts, he says, "were a few reliable indications of how Mark Twain's mind worked on the material out of which his books were made—what the nature of his talent really was." This book shows that he found not a few but many such clues and that his study of them has richly illuminated Twain's literary methods.

Papers which had been largely ignored included a part of a novel which Paine had labeled "Boy's manuscript. Probably written about 1870"—Clemens's first attempt at extended fiction and, more important, his first rehearsal of "Tom Sawyer"; twenty-six pages of working notes used by Clemens in writing and revising his masterpiece, "Huckleberry Finn"; hundreds of pages of manuscripts in which Twain had fumbled and groped his way to the writing of "The Mysterious Stranger." These previously unpublished materials, in other words, are of as much vital importance to Twain's literary biography as anything ever published by Paine.

This volume contains the "Boy's manuscript," the "Huckleberry Finn" notes, and part of the most interesting manuscript preparatory for "The Mysterious Stranger." It also contains three essays by Mr. DeVoto, one about the writing of each of the three books involved, in which he brilliantly records the results of his study of these and other relevant documents. He ponders all his evidence, reasons shrewdly, and unfolds the story of his deductions with skill comparable to that of a mystery novel writer. Consequently, this book sets forth information which hereafter will be indispensable to scholars, and sets it forth in such a way as to make fascinating reading.

Mr. DeVoto is interested chiefly in how these books were written, but he does not confine himself to this problem. He adds literary evaluations and considerations of forms. Here, inevitably, he is on less sure ground than



Mark Twain

in even his most speculative biographical studies. Here, however, many of his judgments are sound, and even the most doubtful of them are interesting and stimulating.

A final point: hitherto Mr. DeVoto had published the materials and studies relevant to "Tom" and "Huck" only in limited editions of these *opera* priced beyond the reach of the average scholar. It was a commendable idea of his to accommodate poverty-stricken students by drawing them together in a reasonably priced book.

Down inside the walls of the bed-packed wards spattered tons of molten lead. The snarl of a fire that has made its kill answered the crash of fighting water . . .

NIGHT OF FLAME

A First Novel by DYSON CARTER

The story of a great city hospital, of Dr. Stevens, whose tally of conquests matched his long record of mended bodies, of Joyce Rathwell, beautiful, amoral, garlanded with as many scalps as Stevens, a story rich with characters, nurses, patients, doctors, with problems of mind and body climaxed by a description of a conflagration which has few equals in modern literature. In the words of a reviewer: "here is a first novel that may well make seasoned writers envious."

$2.50

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Pryor . . .

AND NEVER YIELD. By Elinor Pryor. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1942. 520 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by WALLACE STEGNER

OF all the long books on the long trials of the Mormons, this is almost the longest and certainly the most romantic. Here is pure buckskin and crinoline romance—a tall, dark hero, a heroine with green eyes, a wilderness of tribulations and hindrances to the course of true love, all of it topped off by the toothsome domestic problems of polygamy.

Linsey Allen, moving by wagon train with her parents to the initial Zion at Far West, Missouri, is a Mormon-hater at the beginning, in spite of her parents' faith. She swears she will not marry a Mormon; she will instead marry her way out of the place as fast as she can. But the advent of black-haired Nathan Welles, on a special mission from Joseph Smith to Governor Boggs, changes all that. Linsey's first aversion to Welles because he is a Saint gives way to trembling love when he rescues her from the murderous mob of Gentiles looting and massacring the little settlement of Haun's Mill. Both her father and mother are killed in that massacre, one of the most ghastly episodes in all of Mormon history, which is full of ghastly episodes. A few days after the capitulation of Far West to the Missouri militia, Linsey and Nathan are married.

They move to the banks of the Mississippi, help to settle Nauvoo the Beautiful, raise a family. Now the specter of polygamy enters. Nathan is commanded by the priesthood to take another wife, asks Linsey's permission, and gets it, despite her jealousy and her feeling that now the whole fine unity is gone from her family. The arrival of an old acquaintance, a frontier major, offers her the chance of escape, and she plans to elope with him, get a divorce on the grounds of bigamy, and remarry. But that plan is upset by the murder of Joseph Smith, and in the realization that now Nathan needs her more than ever, that all the Saints must cling together in preparation for even worse disasters, Linsey finally becomes a good Saint, reconciled to plurality and her husband's religion.

There is nothing in that story which is particularly romantic. The massacre at Haun's Mill, the settling of Nauvoo, the revelation of plural marriage, are straight out of history. It is in the handling of her materials that Miss Pryor introduces the romance. The manner, tone, style, reactions of her characters, are ultimately and completely feminine. This is a woman's book, a woman's view of the Mormon epic, not a man's. History and romance and domesticity blend as they blend in the novels of Bess Streeter Aldrich. "And Never Yield," especially where Miss Pryor becomes tender, or where she attempts to be tough, might make a good many men snort.

Miss Pryor has studied her history well, but there are things about her first novel that indicate a slight uncertainty. The novel is too long: a hundred pages could be cut with good effect. The characters are for the most part types, and the pathos is laid on a little thick. Little Sammy, his kneecap shot away at Haun's Mill, would just have to be a heroic and profane little urchin calculated to draw tears from a hitching-boy.

But Miss Pryor's sense for material is not wrong. There is a story, and a good one, in early Mormon history. It is so good a story that many will read this novel with pleasure, in spite of its rather soft texture and its occasional weaknesses in technique.

Brush . . .

THE BOY FROM MAINE. By Katharine Brush. New York: Farrar & Rinehart. 1942. 340 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by PHIL STONG

THIS is a heroic effort to take the gay, brittle, and slightly desperate survivors of the last war and bring them up to date. The scope is a quarter of a century; the difficulties of developing the same principal characters over such a period are obvious. Miss Brush avoids the difficulties by hardly developing her characters at all, but that frequently happens in life.

The boy from Maine is an amiable lout from one of the resort and lobster islands; he is in love with the beautiful daughter of some wealthy city folks. This hopeless attachment leads him to join the Navy, where he serves on transport duty and meets a magnificently benevolent old dame remarkably like the late Tex Guinan. After the war he becomes the Master of Ceremonies for her various night clubs and a figure of Broadway in an incredibly short time.

The ineffable Rosalie, in the meanwhile, has married a lieutenant on account of his uniform and dropped him for an air hero, a former all-American football player whose male beauty is irresistible. After the war this chap has no practicable arena left for his special talents but the bars and boudoirs of New York. This circumstance, combined with Depression and perhaps the insipid and unexciting liquors of Repeal, starts dissension between him and his wife which is not amelior-

The whole truth

concerning one of the most remarkable stories in the history of the United States Navy

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

THE TRAGIC CAREER OF COMMODORE JAMES BARRON

By Paul Barron Watson

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Events of this war give immediate importance to this dramatic, carefully documented account of the court martial and final complete justification and reinstatement of Commodore Barron, commander of the ill-fated *Chesapeake*, forced to strike her colors under a surprise attack from the British in 1807 when the United States was *not* at war. One of the strangest stories ever told. $1.50

COWARD-McCANN

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"A deep and sustaining faith glows through every page of the book."

—AMERICA

THE Children

By NINA FEDOROVA

Author of "THE FAMILY"

An Atlantic Monthly Press Book

$2.50 • LITTLE, BROWN

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ated by the old experiment of a baby. The man understands himself well enough to slip off to the Spanish Civil War where a Communist lady with a rifle removes him from the story.

This would make everything clear for Rosalie and the Maine boy except for the fact that in something like sheer sulkiness the latter has married a beautiful young hag whom he has always detested. The rest of the story deals with getting this nuisance out of the way and the decision of Rosalie and the boy to give up glamor and go to Washington to do something about the current war. The sobering up and maturing of the war youth of 1918 in the years between then and the new war is a difficult thesis and how well Miss Brush has done it is more or less a matter of individual taste. The book might have profited by a little spread of locale, for the night world of Manhattan is fairly screwball even at the quietest times and the social evolution of the inter-war years does not show as strongly there as it might in other scenes.

Austin . . .

THE SUN DIAL. By Richard Austin Smith. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1942. 264 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by N. L. ROTHMAN

THERE have been many recent tales about Maine people, but never anything like this one. Perhaps that is because Mr. Smith is no Maine man himself, but a Southerner who loves the sea, as well as a writer who moves wholly and unashamedly between the poles of romanticism and mysticism. "The Sun Dial" is a book of moods and sensations, colors and dreams. The love story of Soren and Suzanne with which it opens is nothing less than an extended prose poem, declaimed against sea and rock, and certainly the overwhelming shock of Suzanne's death is a new experience in fiction. Has the earth ever suddenly swallowed up a woman before her lover's eyes? For the rest of the book, Soren seeks to drown his grief in action, sailing, exploring, war work (First World War). This latter part seems vaguer, if only because mysticism and laconic poetry are not good vehicles for the narration of hard, bitter action. There is a return to poetic effectiveness at the end, in Soren's chosen Viking death, in a remarkable scene on a target boat under fire.

"The Sun Dial" is a rare one, often beautiful, but what counts most is Mr. Smith's writing, his easy power with words, his true sense of poetry.

N. L. R.

Wilder . . .

FLAMINGO ROAD. By Robert Wilder. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1942. 342 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by BESS JONES

MR. WILDER goes in for strong stuff, some of which is very funny, some very sentimental, some flashy and melodramatic, and some just coarse. If he could have kept up the conte-like quality of his earlier chapters, his book could have taken a comfortable place on the shelf reserved for such enjoyable literary sinners as "February Hill" and "The Great Big Doorstep." Even when he goes sweet on you he still manages to lure you to the end, not only because you keep hoping for a return to the broad wit of the first part, but because he can write.

The novel's setting is Truro, Florida, where Titus Semple, as evil as he looks, succeeds in running everything and everybody to suit himself except one little ex-carnival girl. Sheriff, maker and breaker of state senators and governors, he plots most of his campaigns at Lute-Mae Sanders' place, in its decorum and its established position in the community a Cracker counterpart of "La Maison Tellier." Lute-Mae's little girls, to be sure, did not go to communion, but twice a week they were loaded into two big Cadillacs for a "sedate airing" around the town, and when in particularly good grace were allowed to go as far as Shell Springs where they could toss pebbles into the water. Two fine columns framing the front steps bore the highly polished inscription, "Academy for Select Young Ladies," which, if it fooled no one, gave the girls a nice feeling and seemed to improve their behavior. Indeed, such respect was accorded the establishment that citizens pointed it out to visitors and relatives with frank civic pride.

The sinister aspect of this story of unscrupulous machine politics is far from lost on either the author or the reader, but Mr. Wilder is too experienced a newspaper man to turn a gusty tale into a moral crusade. Almost the only legal act in the book is a wedding ceremony, and even that had its political purpose.

Mr. Wilder's plot becomes almost an extravaganza before he finishes, and he greatly overworks the credibility of the heart-of-gold theme in his heroine, but in Lute-Mae and the monstrous Sample, he has realized two characters completely, and he can create a strong sense of place and physical qualities. Followers of the genteel tradition, however, may find him very shocking.

The Highest Point in Lyric Expression of

RAINER MARIA RILKE

Sonnets to Orpheus

Translated by
M. D. Herter Norton

THESE sonnets were inspired by a friend's account of the fatal illness of her daughter, a vivid young creature he had seen as a child, and it is not difficult to understand how he came to express his beliefs concerning life and death through the image of the poet-god, at home in both worlds. Rilke's approach to reality through the imagination awakens in his fellow man new sensibilities toward the whole created world, new consciousness of the intuitive world beyond the boundaries of creation.

Believing that a poet's individuality is most truly reflected in his imagery, in his way of seeing and feeling as most characteristically expressed by the language of his thought, the translator has sought, as in earlier volumes, to keep faith with the original text, preserving the meter and the rhythm as far as possible. The book is printed with the German text on the pages facing each translation. $2.50

Other Volumes by RAINER MARIA RILKE
in translation by M. D. Herter Norton

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The Academic Process

THE ACADEMIC MAN. By Logan Wilson. New York: Oxford University Press. 1942. 248 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by RUBIN GOTESKY

THAT much maligned indignitary, the Academic Man, has been, at last, subjected to dispassionately objective dissection. The wild-haired, beslippered, mild-eyed, and mildewed creature who taught because he was unable to act, vanishes and a keen, aggressive, self-interested personality appears who is a part and product of the academic environment which is itself a part of the total social environment.

Many common illusions evaporate before the cool wind of analysis which Professor Logan blows through the pages of his book. For example, the Academic Man is not born but made by a special academic process which shapes and molds him to its own particular uses. He has first to do graduate work, thesis writing, and a certain amount of teaching, and he has to play the sedulous ape and disciple of the professor who is going ultimately to get him a job. There is the making of useful friends and a reputation, all of which together help him tc achieve that prize possession—a professorship. The average Academic Man is not without ambition to marry well, to place himself as high as possible both academically and socially, and to make as much money as other men. As a matter of fact, the modern Academic Man has developed a variety of ingenious techniques to attract the attention of the public and his superiors to himself. He often writes not with the purpose of revealing the Olympus of truth but with that of startling with novel ideas, his confreres and the lay public.

The University, too, is no lofty Temple in which truth is worshipped for itself alone. It is run by presidents and administrators, often ex-professors, with the main eye peeled upon getting new endowments and increasing enrollments. These administrators, too, are not always interested in encouraging faculties to seek truth dispassionately, without heed to practical consequences. Ofter they prefer and select a faculty whose manners and thoughts will be considered as above reproach by those who make large contributions to University funds. Often, too, they pretend to value good teaching, but actually have no interest in any faculty activity which does not serve to bring the University before the public eye.

These are some of the unpleasant truths, not altogether new as Professor Wilson himself admits, which he collates together. But he does not present them out of focus, distorted by bitterness or social pessimism. He refuses to blame entirely the Universities and their rulings boards. He thinks faculties themselves must share the responsibility. Faculties are often narrowminded, intolerant of change, lazy and jealous of new men with talent and ideas. In other cases, really good Academics unfortunately refuse often to participate in matters common to all Academic Men on the false assumption that such activity is propagandistic or that it is not necessary because truth must ultimately prevail. Lastly, he thinks the lay public must share in this responsibility because of its prejudiced picture of the Academic and the University.

Professor Wilson feels that only serious sociological investigation into the social context and internal structure of a university will reveal how these well-known shortcomings can be done away with. He thinks that not only the Academic Man but the layman ought to be vitally interested in such investigations, for the contribution of the University and the Academic Man in science and scholarship are essential to society's well-being. Professor Logan hopes that his study will be the first of an increasing number intended for professionals and laymen.

We too, hope so. More than ever in a period of world cataclysm must the Academic Man attempt to realize his high function as teacher of mankind and discover of truth.

Today's great war reading!

TOLSTOY on Russia
ERIC KNIGHT on England
STEINBECK on Norway
HEMINGWAY on Spain
ST. EXUPERY on France
••
TIEN CHUN on China

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ANSWERS TO LITERARY QUIZ

1. Prince Edward and Tom Canty, in "The Prince and the Pauper," by Mark Twain.
2. Sydney Carton and Charles Darnay, in "A Tale of Two Cities," by Charles Dickens.
3. Rudolf Rassendyll and King Rudolf of Ruritania, in "The Prisoner of Zenda," by Anthony Hope.
4. Tweedledum and Tweedledee, in "Through the Looking Glass," by Lewis Carroll.
5. Viola and Sebastian, in "Twelfth Night," by Shakespeare.
6. Louis XIV and his twin brother, in "The Man in the Iron Mask," by Alexandre Dumas.
7. Jerome Herbert Middleton and Lionel Catesby, in "The Spectacles of Mr. Cagliostro," by Harry Stephen Keeler.
8. Laura Fairlie and Anne Catherick, in "The Woman in White," by Wilkie Collins.
9. Frederic Ingham and Dennis Shea, in "My Double and How He Undid Me," by Edward Everett Hale.
10. Thomas a Becket Driscoll and Valet de Chambre, in "Pudd'nhead Wilson," by Mark Twain.

Joseph Henry Jackson of San Francisco and Lesley Byrd Simpson of Berkeley have received the eleventh annual gold literature medals of the Commonwealth Club of California. Mr. Jackson was awarded the gold medal in general literature for his book, "Anybody's Gold." Mr. Simpson, associate professor of Spanish at the University of California, received the gold medal in scholarship and research for his book, "Many Mexicos."

WHAT DEMOCRACY MEANT TO THE GREEKS

By W. R. AGARD

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The University of North Carolina Press

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BOOKS IN WARTIME

(*Continued from page 4*)

champion. And I refer, particularly, to the discovery made by our enemies before we were awake, of the incredible power of ideas, prejudices, passions, and lies, if taken from the books which are their filing cases, made into high speed projectiles, and shot over the world. A power which drives the weak into hate, the frustrated into aggressiveness, and shatters unity in families, in parties, and in nations.

A satisfying percentage of this generation has been trained, liberally trained, to use its minds so as to determine which is the worse and which is the better reason. But, in the Hegelian sense, right thinking is always the product of a synthesis of opposites. You must know as much as possible. You must look down as well as up, to the left as well as to the right, before you make up your own mind. And even more important for my argument, which is concerned with this crisis, this war, is the warning to realize the importance of ideas in the conflict, which means, as I have explained, the importance of books. They can, very literally, wreck us, and, very literally again, help to save us. I remember, as long ago as 1933, talking to a Frenchman who had been convinced by the arguing of the school of Liddell Hart that defence was impregnable in modern war. And, that same summer, to a Dutchman who had been converted by "Mein Kampf" to the belief that the wave of the future was inevitably carrying Holland into the protective and fostering arms of a greater Germany. Those two men, and thousands of leaders (for they were leaders) like them, were so many causes for the downfall of their countries. In the beginning was the Word, and the word has spelled the end of all good things for millions in 1939 to 1942.

I do not wish to be misunderstood. There is no opposition between what I am urging and the many activities in behalf of our war effort into which we will all find ourselves plunged. Just talking never won any war, nor did just thinking, and certainly not just reading books. The shock troops of the modern world of radio and general literacy are ideas. But fighters must follow, backed by a total effort behind the lines. Yet the American who goes through this war period without opening his mind to the winds of doctrine and the blasts of fact, is likely to work and live and fight in a fog. Is likely to be the easy victim of any skilful propaganda. Is likely to be fodder for the stupid or ill-willed men who, after the war, will quite surely try again to establish some greedy, prejudiced, short-sighted order of settlement which will inevitably, as before, lead to another war.

However, it is not peace but war and victory of which I am writing. And I ask the reader that, when he seeks the meaning of this war and the nature of the victory he wishes to see, he does not neglect such filing cases as he has access to. Do not underestimate ideas or books. The naval strategy of the Allies is drawn from the books of Admiral Mahan. The air strategy, as it is being developed by all the combatants, is based upon a series of books, of which the recent "Victory through Air Power" by Alexander de Seversky is one of the most brilliant. Ask any competent military officer whether books are important in war time, and you will get one certain reply. For most of us, military strategy and tactics are important only in their results. But our own strategy, how our minds propose to view this war, and our own tactics, what we personally intend to do about it, are of great importance to each one of us. We have been taught to use books. If we are confused, or ignorant (and who is not?), or if we ourselves are undecided as to what it is all about, and why men have to die, and what they are dying for, and what stake we, as individuals and Americans, have in victory, it is important not to forget our filing cases, and, when necessary, get new ones.

The country laughed when Churchill called Mussolini the great miscalculator. But how the French miscalculated after the last war when they thought they could clamp down peace and security on Europe! How we miscalculated when we thought we could keep out of trouble by withdrawing from world settlement while continuing to do business with the world! How the Austrians miscalculated at the beginning of that war when they tried to smother their Serbian difficulties in a European conflict! Was there no wisdom available? Plenty. A historian can supply you with a bibliography of good books published before each event, and showing its inevitable failure. But the leaders did not want to use their filing cases, because they had immediate purposes of their own; and the people never opened theirs, and were easily misled. In the old wars of Greece they used to say to the citizens, come back with your shields, or on them. I say to the reader, whatever else you do for your country, don't, when it comes to ideas, be dumb.

This article is drawn from a Commencement Address by Dr. Canby at the recent graduation exercises of Finch Junior College in New York.

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THE WIND BLEW FROM THE EAST

By FERNER NUHN

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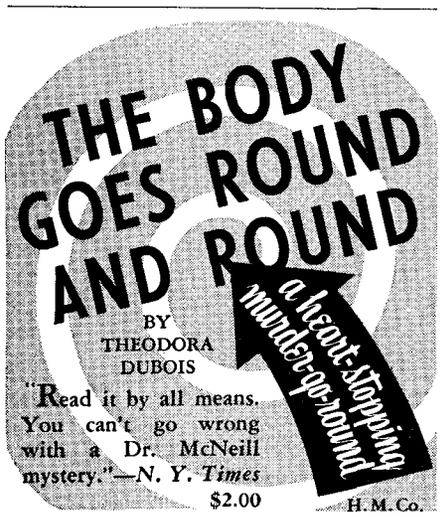
The Phoenix Nest

"Under the Jack-Staff"

IT seems in another incarnation now that we originally descanted upon the work of *Chester Bailey Fernald* in "The Phoenix Nest." Somewhere we have a letter sent to us about Mr. Fernald's years after 1907 (he being then thirty-eight) which he spent in England where he became known as a dramatist. But we were talking then about his earliest book, "The Cat and the Cherub," the titular short-story concerning a small "Chinee" boy and his pet. This infant was befriended by a certain Miss Bailey whom he called "Pay-Lee," and we recall the poignance of the moment when she unwisely attempted to give him a bath! "The Cat and the Cherub" was published in 1896, before the Spanish-American War, and "Chinatown Stories" followed it three years later. We had, however, forgotten about Fernald, when just the other day we picked up, in our browsings among second-hand bookstalls,—for the enormous price of ten cents, as we recall—a copy of "Under the Jack-Staff," consisting of stories written about the beginning of the century and published by the Century Company in October, 1903, just about forty years ago. The fifth story in the book, "A Hard Road to Andy Coggin's," we can remember our father chuckling over when it first appeared in a magazine, probably *Harper's*. In triumph we bore home our discovery. We had never read the "Andy Coggin's" story ourself. Now we did so, and its sequel, "Clarence's Mind," and the convulsing second story, "The Spirit in the Pipe," and the grim first story, "The Lights of Sitka," and the comicker-than-Stephen-Crane Spanish-American War story, "The Yellow Burgee," and the rest of the total of eleven stories, all of them standing up remarkably well today, most of them highly amusing.

There is no doubt that Fernald owed a trifle to the early tale-telling Rudyard Kipling, but Fernald's own creation of two American bluejackets, Clarence O'Shay and Sudd Lannigan, is also his own. "The Oxford Companion" calls these stories "dramatic tales of life at sea, based on Fernald's travels in Alaska, Europe, and the Orient." Dramatic they are too, and several especially so, but that characterization leaves out the fact of their pervading humor. O'Shay's adventures in quest of a plate of beans at Andy Coggin's are superbly ludicrous, and the same is true of his imprisonment aboard the *Utah,* his thwarted love-affair with the half-Siwash Gloria Mundy ("The Transit of Gloria Mundy"), and what befell him at the ball of the Reverend Order of Wise Men. The stories are told with a trace of brogue that is the real thing and the Celtic gift for telling phraseology, as witness, "He'd not gone forty rods before he sent an old woman puckering up her petticoats and squawking off through the fog like a fowl." No mean feat of writing, that! Nor this, from "The Yellow Burgee":

> The sea was a lavender Japanee crape; a pasty fog picked its skirts across us, with the moon shining through like a paper screen. We lumbered the bit of a swell like a blind blue dripping shape of lead for our war-paint, with our funnels daubling ag'in the sky; and the little six-pounders sniffed over the berthings, and the big rifles stared with their thoughts nine miles in space. She come at a gathering gait; two brown ribbons streamed behind,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The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
MEET MR. FORTUNE *H. C. Bailey* (Crime Club: $2.)	Assorted English murders gathered into omnibus of 1 novel and 13 stories all featuring rotund Reginald.	Excellent selection of Fortuniana. Novel (The Bishops Crime) among his best adventures, and short pieces admirable.	Reward-in'
THE TWELVE DISGUISES *Francis Beeding* (Harpers: $2.)	Unexplained silence of brother spy in conquered France sends Alastair Granby on search with sardonic conclusion.	Believable description of war-swept continent, dramatic espionage methods, colorful people and red hot action.	Grade-A spyarn
THE BIG MIDGET MURDERS *Craig Rice* (Simon & Schuster: $2.)	Half-pint Chicago nitery actor garroted with silk hose. Others follow, likewise. More work for Malone, Brand and Justus.	Expertly timed original crime and frenzied follow-up cannily solved by lawyer-sleuth, with lavish accompaniment of good wise-cracking.	Superior
MURDER IN RETROSPECT *Agatha Christie* (Dodd, Mead: $2.)	To save good name of daughter of dead woman convicted of murder H. Poirot solves sixteen year old mystery.	Phenomenal memories of participants in lang syne poisoning may trouble some, but treatment is deft and solution surprising.	Grade-B Poirot
THE SIX IRON SPIDERS *Phoebe Atwood Taylor* (Norton: $2.)	Returning to Cape Cod home after war-work absence, Asey Mayo crosses threshold and meets murder.	Consid'ble good fun poked at First Aiders, well hidden killer, and cool, ca'm and c'llected detecting.	Typical
HERO BY PROXY *Hildegarde Tolman* (Little, Brown: $2.)	Yankee business man on trip to Central American republic assumes venturesome brother's identity and dives deep into Phalangist intrigues.	Overlong and sometimes confusing tale of current Nazi plots in Latin America redeemed by lively action and whale of a wind-up.	Passable

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singing a song of sixpence to a sea that curled and kissed her lines in admiration. Her pilot-house rushed in a point like an arrow, as if she would say: "I'm a round nine thousand tons of steel, and I ride by the quest of freedom."

Fernald was born in 1869 in Boston, lived in San Francisco for about four years, and died in 1938. We still think he is one of the prose writers of the United States who has had far too little recognition.

Story Magazines

Speaking of short stories, who can give us any information about that long-ago short-story magazine, *The Black Cat,* where so many well-known writers made their first start in life? As we recall, it printed nothing but short stories, and might have been the precursor, in a sense, of *Whit Burnett's Story.* Was it not for *The Black Cat* that the excoriating reviewer we liked most in our youth, who rejoiced in the grand name of *John Stapleton Cowley-Brown,* used to pen his great invectives? And does anyone remember *The Blue Mule,* a purely West Coast story magazine that flourished in San Francisco about 1908 or so, and was probably backed by Twenty-Mule-Team Borax? We can remember our own early efforts being turned down by both periodicals! Our memories of these magazines antedate our coming to New York and eating at the old Codington Restaurant near the corner of Sixth Avenue and 42nd Street, discovered for us by Sinclair Lewis. It seems to us that there was also a magazine called *Short Story.* Maybe it was for *Short Story* that Cowley-Brown etched in vinegar. He used to list books as *Recent Reading* and *Recent Rot.* He could certainly remove the epidermis of authors in long quivering strips!

Speaking of Sinclair Lewis, how the cigarette situation has changed since he wrote, in "The Trail of the Hawk," of how Gertie Cowles went to dinner in Manhattan's Bohemian haunts. "The dinner had been at a marvelous place on West Tenth Street—very foreign, every one drinking wine and eating spaghetti and little red herrings, and the women fearlessly smoking cigarettes—some of them." That must have been around 1916. Today our wife, and all the other men's wives we know, all smoke constantly. Funnily enough ourself and our best friend do not smoke at all—we, because we've sworn off now for several years, and he because he never did. But the women-folks keep the air blue! Still, we wish we knew just what place on West Tenth Street (which is about two blocks from where we live) "Red" might have had in mind!

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

PERSONALS

ADVERTISEMENTS will be accepted in this column for things wanted or unwanted; personal services to let or required; literary or publishing offers not easily classified elsewhere; miscellaneous items appealing to a select and intelligent clientèle; jobs wanted, houses or camps for rent, tutoring, traveling companions, ideas for sale; communications of a decorous nature, expressions of opinion (limited to fifty lines). All advertisements must be consonant with the purpose and character of The Saturday Review. Ads of a strictly personal nature are limited to an exchange of correspondence, thus also enabling an exchange of reference. Rates: 10 cents per word including signature. Count two additional words for Box and Number. Payment in full must be received ten days in advance of publication. We forward all mail received in answer to box numbers. Address Personal Dept., Saturday Review, 25 West 45th Street, New York City.

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The Crostics Club

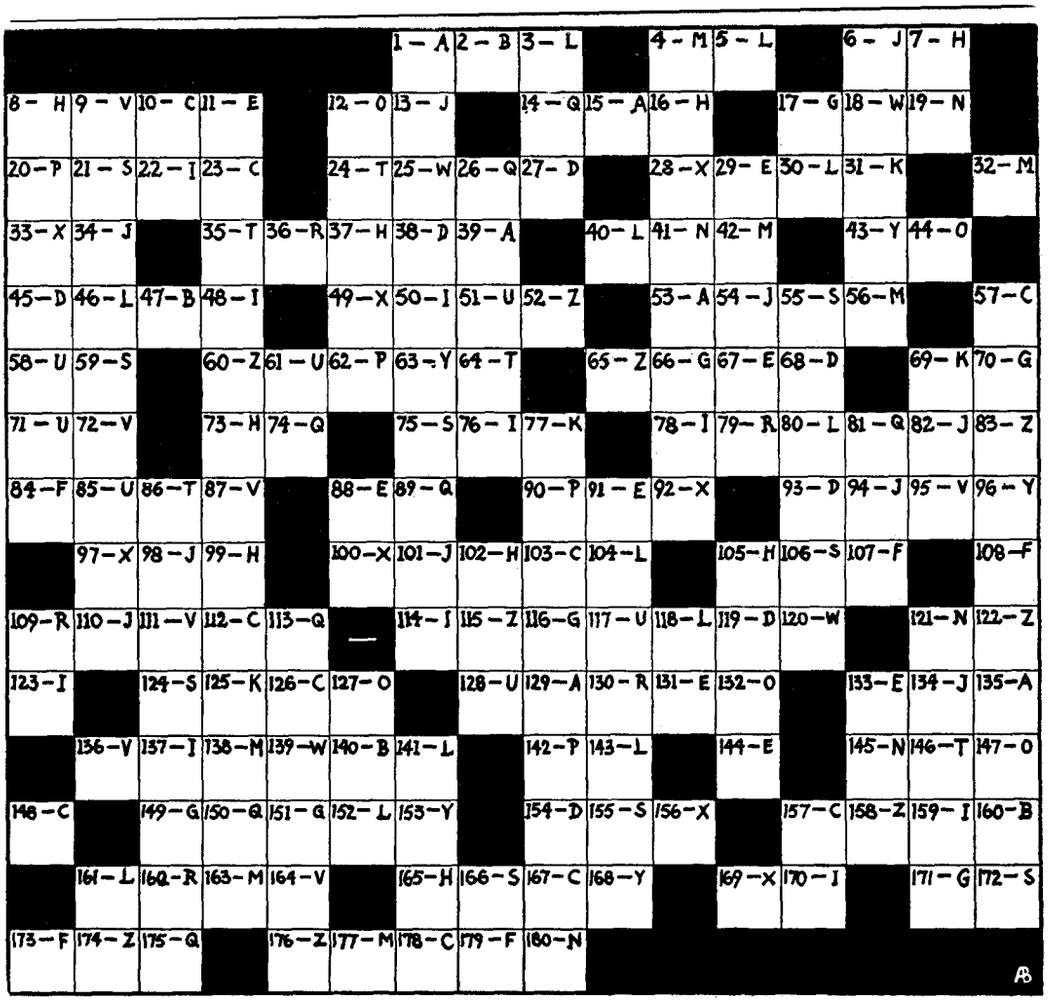
THAT link with James Weldon Johnson had its first forging the summer I met at Wellesley, on her way across the State, Mary W. Ovington of N. Y. City, intellectual and early Crosticker. When she told me that her vital interest was Negro education I enlisted her at once in securing permission to use a selection from "Black and Unknown Bards," for the publishers had not responded to my request. "Write to J. W. J. direct," she said, "for he is my friend and Berkshire neighbor. In fact, I am the author of his biography." His appreciative reply I cherish among my famous fan letters.

Stage II—I lay out the selected quotation in anagram letters, making sure that every one of the 175 letters is there. Through chagrin galore I have *almost* learned the lesson: Check up at every turn! Why, only today, and not until I reached the diagram stage of a DC, did I discover a *warm* for *worn*. *Warm* made sense and I was quite unsuspecting. That error, necessitating as it did the taking out of an *am* and the substituting of *on* among twenty-six words, cost me two hours. One summer, while compiling the fifty puzzles for a book, in order to get the anagram stage out of the way I left all the checking to the end. Puzzle after puzzle was all awry. I could account for it only on the ground that the over-conscientious, deaf "zobzib" (See Gelett Burgess), despite my warning, had dusted overboard the letters of words formed and had restored them to the unused piles.

Tow-row will not down! Lady Agnes Adams of Hollywood, after quoting the first stanza with the chorus of the three in "The British Grenadiers," "anonymous, sixteenth Century, to be found in old English song-books," adds: "The chorus in each verse is concerned with the *tow row* of the British Grenadier. Of course Stevenson made the word of the two sixteenth century words, but as a child he simply must have marched round the lawn singing 'The British Grenadiers.' We all marched to that tune.

Professor Roger Johnson of Brooklyn College reminds me that two years ago he protested *tow-row* as his special *bêté noire*. He thinks that the hyhen, inadvertently omitted by me from the Stevenson quotation, makes the word merely onomatopoeic and not legitimate; but I think that its onomatopoeic quality gives it the very validity I claim for it! What's the matter with *rub-a-dub* as a legitimate word? Miss Katherine M. Wilkinson of N. Y. City has been "outraged" more than once by my use of *tow-row*. Did you note how Elmer Davis in his May 30 article suggested that *towrow* might fit the situation stirred up by the publishers of "Islandia?" We liked that, Elmer Davis!

E. S. K.



DOUBLE-CROSTICS: No. 430 By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-six words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (1940 edition).

last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 5 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. A *jar* used as an electrical condenser (elec.)

B. Son of Seth, lived 905 years (Bib.)

C. Romance by Cooper of a pirate ship (1830).

D. Caught, as eels, by thrusting the bait into their hiding places.

E. Any dark rock with grains invisible to the naked eye (petrog.)

F. Author of *The Making of an American* (1901).

G. Laid smooth.

H. Any of certain Indian birds that feed on palm juice.

I. Danish astronomer (1546-1601).

J. Surname of Edward I of England.

K. A heroine of one of the *Idylls of the King.*

L. A scene of noise and confusion (Bib.)

M. Applied to a *crowd* in Gray's *Elegy.*

N. German industrial city.

O. Novel by Julian Hawthorne (1877).

P. A giant grass used in making Mexican baskets.

Q. Hungarian pianist, composer, conductor (1877-).

R. Manifest; apparent.

S. The true state of things (colloq.; 2 wds.)

T. Attractively stylish (slang).

U. Exerting influence in a particular direction.

V. Large fish-hawks.

W. A simple-minded person ignorant of changing conditions (colloq.)

X. Discolored as if burned.

Y. A "Boojum" (Lewis Carroll).

Z. Assails mercilessly.

WORDS

__ __ __ __ __ __
1 129 39 53 135 15

__ __ __ __
2 160 140 47

__ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __
10 178 126 103 112 157 57 23 167 148

__ __ __ __ __ __ __ __
27 38 154 149 93 45 119 68

__ __ __ __ __ __ __ __
144 29 91 67 11 88 133 131

__ __ __ __
173 84 179 108

__ __ __ __ __ __
171 151 70 116 66 17

__ __ __ __ __ __ __ __
105 7 99 102 16 165 73 37 8

__ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __
48 123 114 137 170 78 159 22 76 50

__ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __
94 54 101 6 34 134 110 98 82 13

__ __ __ __
77 31 125 69

__ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __
3 80 141 5 104 30 143 161 46 40 152 118

__ __ __ __ __ __ __
4 138 42 163 32 56 177

__ __ __ __ __
41 121 145 19 180

__ __ __ __ __
147 12 132 44 127

__ __ __ __ __
142 20 62 90 107

__ __ __ __ __ __ __ __
26 81 175 89 14 74 113 150

__ __ __ __ __
162 130 36 79 109

__ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __
124 106 166 75 59 55 21 172 155

__ __ __ __ __
24 146 35 86 64

__ __ __ __ __ __ __
51 71 85 117 61 128 58

__ __ __ __ __ __ __
9 87 72 111 95 164 136

__ __ __ __ __
120 25 139 18

__ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __
100 156 33 28 49 97 169 92

__ __ __ __ __
153 96 43 63 168

__ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __
174 158 83 115 65 176 60 122 52

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TRADE WINDS

ACCORDING TO RUMOR, David Selznick is toying with a notion of making a motion-picture version of the Henry James novel, "The Wings of a Dove," and Max Perkins of Scribner's suggested that the book might make a timely addition to the Modern Library series. We regret to report, however, that we bogged down completely after sixty pages or so. This is one of James's later novels, and its style is more involved than Faulkner's "Sound and Fury" or Isabel Paterson's political dissertations. A typical sentence: "Had this thereby not kept directly present to Kate herself that it might, on some sides, prove no light thing for her to leave unaccompanied a parent with such a face and such a manner? . . . We guess we'll just wait for the picture version! If you want to sample Henry James, we urge you to read "The Turn of the Screw," one of the great ghost stories of all time. . . . Another item on our weekend reading list was Mary McCarthy's "The Company She Keeps," a brilliantly written but extremely unpleasant book. No less than three copies were in evidence in the bouse where we were staying. Everybody professed to dislike the book intensely, but nobody put it down before finishing it. We have put Miss McCarthy near the top of the list of authors we want to meet . . . .

JUST when we were wondering how many wrong guesses our self-styled military experts had to make in print or over the radio before they ceased being recognized as experts, one of the most omnipotent of them all finally got canned for a truly colossal wrong guess on the Coral Sea battle. Maybe we ought to borrow a rule from the basketball solons: four personal fouls —and out!! . . . Samuel Goldwyn was introduced recently to Aldous Huxley. "I'm delighted to meet you, Mr. Huxley," he exclaimed. "I understand you're practically a genius!" . . . Stanley Rinehart has written a beguiling article on the Rinehart family for the current issue of *Good Housekeeping*. . . . Max Salop, the famous international sportsman, is publishing a book on bass fishing. . . .

THE LATE MAX HARZOF was one of the rare book trade's great "characters." There are countless anecdotes about him. Gabriel Welles tells how he once bought an Oscar Wilde manuscript for $1,040. "Why the odd price?" he asked, after the bargain had been struck. Harzof replied with commendable candor, "I wanted to make an even thousand dollar profit." . . . Burns Mantle's annual play summary has been the accepted authority in the book world for many years, but in this year's critics' boxscore in *Variety* he runs a bad last. Mr. Mantle guessed wrong on eleven out of sixty-five plays, and on twelve others he expressed no opinion clear enough to classify. That gave him an average of .646 and ninth place. Louis Kronenberger was first with sixty "rights" out of sixty-five chances, and a cool average of .923. John Mason Brown was second, and John Anderson third. . . .

CASS CANFIELD, of Harper's, now working for the Bureau of Economic Warfare in Washington, was approached one day in his editorial sanctum by a sweet-faced but determined matron who wanted very much to discuss a first novel on which she was working. "How long should a novel be?" she demanded. "That's an impossible question to answer," explained Canfield. "Some novels, like 'Ethan Frome,' are only about 40,000 words long. Others, 'Gone with the Wind,' for instance, may run to 300,000." "But what is the average length of the ordinary novel," the lady persisted. "Oh, I'd say about 80,000 words," said Canfield. The lady jumped to her feet with a cry of triumph. "Thank God!" she cried, "my book is finished!"

VETERAN BOOKSELLERS never thought they would live to see the day when a manual on the building of septic tanks would outsell "Two Gun Ginsberg's Revenge." In some puzzlement, they have been compelled to shift their fiction displays to the back of the store, and turn the rest of their stock topsy-turvy. Technical books have the call today—engineering texts, first aid guides, hows and whys of aviation, and compendiums for men in the armed services. Most of these books sell at high prices, but the discounts are small, and the booktrade will not be unhappy when the demand shifts back to more normal channels.

FICTION has taken the worst shellacking. Bookstores all over the country report to *Publishers' Weekly* that aside from the few top bestsellers, new novels are floundering badly. Detective stories are holding up better than Westerns. Light romances—the kind that were once manufactured for the circulating library trade—are a drug on the market. In the standard reprint lines, volumes of philosophy and humor have come to the fore, and there has been an increased demand for anthologies of poetry, too. Books from the warfront still have the call, but the law of diminishing returns is beginning to operate. Some of our foreign correspondents have done a wonderful job under maddening conditions. Others, however, have spent a great deal of their time in their hotel bars, and have simply cabled home the official hand-out each day. Some of the publishers who have been waving contracts indiscriminately at every correspondent who came home on the *Drottningholm* recently are likely to wind up with a couple of prize limburgers on their hands.

BENNETT CERF.

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